

Delaware fourth graders ‘Make a Splash’ and learn about protecting water resources

DOVER – More than 780 fourth-grade students from eight elementary schools participated in the April 16 “Make a Splash” festival, an event that educates students on the diversity of estuary life and the importance of Delaware’s water resources. The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control-sponsored festival is held annually at the St. Jones Reserve, a component of the Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the Delaware Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs’ John Dickinson Plantation near Dover – both wonderful locations for the students to explore the state’s past and present water resource issues.

“Make a Splash provides the students with hands-on experiences that tie together everything they have learned this school year about land, water and Delaware history,” said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. “It is our hope that providing the students with this opportunity will help them connect what they learned in the classroom to real life, and experiencing those connections will inspire them as Delaware’s water resource stewards.”

Students visited 25 activity stations dedicated to the historical and current uses of Delaware’s water resources. At a station called “The Incredible Journey,” students learned about how water moves through the water cycle and how only a relatively small amount of the world’s water is actually available for human use on the earth. At other stations, they learned about Lenape Indian water traditions, the uses of water in colonial cooking, historical use of water wheels, Delaware’s wetlands, and groundwater water pollution and solutions, learning how to help control mosquitoes in the

state, and how water helps keep our trees strong and healthy, just to name a few.

Delaware's *Make a Splash* festival has been educating students and encouraging actions to help protect water resources for 19 years. Participating schools in this year's "Make a Splash" event included: Clayton Elementary, Clayton; First State Montessori, Wilmington; Lighthouse Christian School, Dagsboro; Mispillion Elementary, Milford; MOT Charter School, Middletown; Odyssey Charter School, Wilmington; Rehoboth Elementary, Rehoboth Beach; and South Dover Elementary, Dover.

More than 100 volunteers – educators, scientists, teachers and parents – participated in today's festival and included staff from DNREC, the Delaware Department of Agriculture; Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve; the Delaware Museum of Natural History; the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs; Kent Conservation District; New Castle Conservation District; Sussex Conservation District; Tidewater Utilities; the National Park Service; the City of Dover; Delaware Sea Grant; Delaware Wildlands; the Delaware Department of Transportation; and the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance. The 2019 planning committee included representatives from DNREC; Delaware Project WET; the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs – John Dickinson Plantation; The City of Dover; The National Park Service; and Tidewater Utilities.

To explore the many educational opportunities and workshops offered at DNREC's Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, contact Maggie Pletta at 302-739-6377 or visit <http://de.gov/dnerr>.

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